

Canada Freedom Rights Movement Statement of Chris Deering

Background

1. I am a 34-year-old father of two and a retired Canadian Military Veteran. I am a born and raised Canadian living in Hanwell, New Brunswick.
2. I joined the Canadian Armed Forces in January 2007. I was medically discharged in 2017 after my injuries I had sustained during my tour in 2008 had caught up with me. I was severely wounded and sustained multiple injuries including many broken bones, fractured pelvis, broken back, reconstructed foot, hearing loss, and other injuries. I lost three of my troop members in the roadside bomb of our Lav-3 and I was the only survivor (the "Bombing"). See attached picture of the bomb crater.

Why I Went to Ottawa

3. I am unvaccinated against Covid-19 Canadian ("Unvaccinated Canadian") by choice and have no intentions of receiving the Covid-19 vaccinations due to my concerns about the vaccine. I had received a mask exemption, and as a result, I faced a lot of discrimination, harassment, and intimidation because of my inability to wear a mask. I was discriminated against in many aspects of normal life for being an Unvaccinated Canadian.
4. Every year since the Bombing, I have gone to Nova Scotia to lay flowers on the gravestones of the two lost members of my troop. Due to Government Covid-19 restrictions, I could not even drive in my vehicle to Nova Scotia to lay flowers on their graves. This was very upsetting to me.
5. My long-time family physician had lost his license during the pandemic due to him not participating in the vaccine passport scheme. This physician was giving treatment to approximately 4000 veterans and their families.
6. For a year and a half, during the first part of the COVID-19 Pandemic and lockdowns (the "Pandemic") between March 2020 and August 2021, I brought my daughters to their gymnastics classes with no issues. However, once the mandates for mandatory covid-19 vaccinations ("Vaccine Mandates") started, I was told that I could no longer enter the gymnastics building and had to drop my daughters off at the door.

7. I heard about the protest from several veterans who were voicing their concerns for what was happening in our Country on social media. I felt compelled to go and protect the citizens of our country from what I felt was overreach from our government. I went to Ottawa to protest for human rights on my own behalf and on the behalf of every Canadian who suffered from the vaccine mandates, irrespective of whether or not they were vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine ("vaccinated Canadian") or an unvaccinated Canadian.
8. I attended the Protest in Ottawa as a severely wounded Veteran to first try and talk to the police forces about the importance of upholding Canadian's Charter rights and freedoms—the same freedoms and human rights I was fighting to protect in Afghanistan—and believing that the police would not use force against an injured Canadian veteran while wearing my war medals.

My Experience in Ottawa at the Protest

9. In the media, I saw allegations of a young woman desecrating the Unknown Soldier's Tomb by dancing on the snow-covered Tomb at the War Memorial. I believe this was an isolated event taken out of context by the media, resulting in the police and government wrongly erecting a temporary fence around our War Memorial.
10. I first attended the Protest in Ottawa on February 11th, 2022, when the Veterans decided to reclaim and remove the temporary fence around our War Memorial. A group of fellow Veterans made arrangements with the police to remove the fence [and agreed that the Veterans would stand watch and protect the War Memorial]. We respectfully removed the fencing and carefully stacked it neatly with police present nearby. We had no issues with the police when we removed the fence. Every Canadian has the right to access our War Memorial anytime they choose.
11. I had such a positive experience while I was at the Protest. I saw and read about crime being down up to 90%. This was a safe Protest, full of loving Canadians exercising their right to freedom of peaceful assembly. The homeless population in Ottawa was showered with food, warm clothes, money, and places to sleep.
12. The businesses in Ottawa that decided to remain open said they had made more money during the Protest than they had in the previous two years. Some businesses I entered had issues with my inability to wear a mask and did not recognize or respect the fact that I had a medical exemption from wearing a mask. To avoid harassment from staff at those businesses, I would just leave the business premises.

The Events on Friday, February 18th, 2022

13. At 12:25 p.m. on Friday, February 18th, 2022, I called my wife to tell her I was heading to the peaceful Protest at the front between the police forces and the peaceful protestors. Like a chain, the police had formed a line advancing violently and aggressively toward the peaceful Canadian protestors. The Veterans in attendance decided to position themselves between the police and the protestors in order to protect and shield innocent, ordinary and peaceful Canadians from the forthcoming onslaught of police violence toward the protestors. Veterans have experienced battle and therefore are better equipped to withstand pain and harm than the average person accustomed to living in a safe environment, free from inhumane treatment, torture and being a target of government-sponsored violence.
14. I noticed that the police forces standing in a line and acting violently and aggressively were wearing green vests and didn't have name tags or badge numbers, so we could not identify them. I was worried that this anonymity for the police officers would encourage the police to be even more violent.
15. It was roughly a 10-to-15-minute delay before the police would start to advance. Within that 10-to-15-minute window, I could converse with some of the police and tell them my story about why I was there and what had happened to me during my time in the Canadian Forces. The surrounding officers did know who I was and what had happened to me because I shared the picture from my time deployed. See attached photo from my deployment. One officer, Jung Kim, even went as far as to give me advice on how to hide and protect myself, as he did not want me to be there. He moved away, so he didn't have to interact with me because he was ashamed. He must have known what the police were doing and about to do to the protestors was wrong and unlawful.
16. At approximately 12:45, some police officers pulled me down and started their procedure to bring me down and arrest me. The police officer pulled me down, grabbed my coat and pulled me toward him, throwing off my balance. He was pulling me behind the police line, and I believe this to be the 'snatch and grab' method used to eliminate protestors, conceal the abuse and excessive use of force from the public behind police lines and execute an arrest and takedown.
17. As I was violently slammed into the ground, the arresting police officer kned me several times in the back and side in the ribs and kidneys. The police officer also kicked me multiple times on the ground on my back and sides.

18. I felt the pain ripple throughout my body, and I was being beaten right in the area where I had been heavily wounded in battle from my tour in Afghanistan. The police reinjured my battle wounds.
19. Once on the ground with my face in the snow, I put my hands in front of me and shouted that I was being peaceful and not resisting. While saying this, I was hit with hands further 4 or 5 times directly in the head. I was violently pushed into the snow, and a knee was put in my back, so I could not move. See the attached video of my arrest.
20. I consider this inhumane, cruel, degrading treatment, excessive and unlawful use of force, and torture. These are the same human rights abuses the Canadian Armed Forces were fighting to prevent in Afghanistan.
21. I was on the ground for roughly 1 to 2 minutes and had my hand zip-tied behind my back, forcing my arms into a painful stress position. I was brought up to a standing position, and the police started walking me to the processing line. The duration from start to finish was about 1.5 to 2 hours. I was standing in minus-20-degree winter weather with my hands tied behind my back, my hands exposed to the freezing elements. I couldn't move. I believe this to be called kettling.
22. The officers handling me knew of my previous injuries and would not allow me to take a knee or sit down. Those 2 hours were gruelling, painful, and some of the worst pain I had felt since being blown up in Afghanistan. Sometimes we would go 15 to 30 minutes without the line moving. There was also another element of humiliation as there were moments when my face would be flushed red due to the physical pain I was in, and I cried periodically due to the pain. The police officers noticed this multiple times and yet said and did nothing.
23. Once I got to the start of the line, the police took all my possessions, took my information, took a photo of me, and wrote my name on a whiteboard. Following this, I was put into the back of a police SUV. Since my hands were still tied behind my back, I could not sit down properly and had to lie on the seat on my side. The police officer explained what was happening to me, but because I have tinnitus and hearing loss, and with a plastic divider between us, I was having a hard time hearing him. Two or three times, I explained to the police officer that I couldn't hear him, so he became angry and shouted at me. After the police officers explained the charges, I told them I understood, and one police officer left for approximately 5 minutes. Upon his return, he told me it was my lucky day and that I wasn't being charged with anything. It was at that point that he told me I would be released.

24. After being told I would be released, officers ordered me to go and sit in a police paddy wagon and gave me no further direction. I was told to sit in the paddy wagon and wait for an undetermined amount of time. While sitting in the paddy wagon, it started to slowly fill up with people, and after about 20 minutes, there were 5 of us in the paddy wagon. Once we had the five people, we sat for another 2 hours until the vehicle began to move. They drove us for roughly 30 to 45 minutes in an unknown direction until the vehicle stopped. I was kidnapped.
25. We were dropped off at a remote location outside of Ottawa near Conroy Road at the Public Works Building. The police officers opened the compartments and let us all out. We were given our possessions and told not to return to Parliament Hill. We were told if we returned, we would be charged. The weather was colder than minus 20, and most of our cell phones died from the cold and the several hours we were bonded and held. There was no place to shelter. We had to focus on how to survive the extreme cold. Some people didn't have any money or masks, so that we could get on public transportation. We did not know where we were as most of us were not from the area, and no one received any paperwork with their belongings. The police did not tell us where we were or what we should do to survive the conditions. I was fortunate enough to have a little battery life left on my phone, so I first called my wife and then a friend I had met the previous day to come to pick us up.
26. I believe the OPP drove me in the paddy wagon, but I am not sure.
27. I did not get charged, and I asked the officers why not, to which they did not respond.
28. I lost my Queen Jubilee Medal when I was thrown to the ground by the police officers.
29. I believe what happened to me on February 18th, 2022, amounts to several violations of my human rights and Charter rights.
30. I genuinely hope the Vaccination Mandates, namely the covid-19 vaccination passport, do not return to Canada. I feel this is a dangerous precedent we are setting, especially as I was beaten, tortured, and kidnapped by the police while exercising my right to peaceful assembly to protest the Vaccination Mandates and in favour of human rights.
31. I contemplated leaving the country I once fought for because I felt Canada was no longer safe for my family and me. My country has lost its way by taking away Canadian human rights instead of respecting them.